

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

DIGITAL SIGNAL PROCESSING AND SIGNAL FORMAT

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A digital signal comprises data blocks, each data block including a header
5 containing data relating to the block and a plurality of slots. Each slot has a slot header
relating to the slot and a data packet. The data packets contain successive parts of
information from a source. A first slot contains a first packet containing a first part of
the said information from the source also contains a reference time. The or each
10 subsequent slot contains a subsequent packet of the information from the said source
also timing information defining the timing of that packet relative to the reference
time.

An encoder which encodes such a signal is provided. The corresponding
decoder is enabled to correctly output the packets to allow correct decoding. Absolute
delay of the packets has no effect on decoding. Jitter (i.e. variation in the timing of
15 the packets relative to each other) may corrupt the decoding. The decoder compares
the timing information of each packet with an internal clock set by the reference time
of the first packet and outputs the packets when the clock time equals the packet time
thus at least reducing the jitter.

The data blocks may be SDTI fixed length blocks and in a transmission system
20 the packets are MPEG 2 TS packets, which are transmitted via an SDTI system. The
data blocks may be SDTI variable length blocks and the packets may be MPEG2 TS
packets, ATM cells or Internet Protocol packets.

25 (Figure 3)